

Article - Public Safety

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§3-510. IN EFFECT

// EFFECTIVE UNTIL JUNE 30, 2019 PER CHAPTER 126 OF 2015 //

(a) To the extent practicable, on or before October 1, 2016, the Baltimore City Police Department and the Baltimore County Police Department each shall establish a behavioral health unit.

(b) A behavioral health unit shall consist of at least six officers who are specially trained:

(1) to understand the needs of individuals with mental health, substance use, or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders; and

(2) in cultural sensitivity and cultural competency.

(c) Training for officers in a behavioral health unit shall be developed in consultation with the Behavioral Health Administration in the Maryland Department of Health.

(d) The purpose of a behavioral health unit is to respond to emergency calls involving an individual suspected of having a mental health, substance use, or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder.

(e) The goals of a behavioral health unit are to:

(1) divert individuals with mental health, substance use, or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders into treatment instead of the criminal justice system; and

(2) prevent and reduce unnecessary use of force and loss of life in situations involving individuals with mental health, substance use, or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

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